

## A VINDICATION OF SUMTER FIREMEN FROM CAMDEN FIREMEN'S FALSE CHARGES.

A Statement of Facts by the Chief of the Sumter Fire Department.

Editor The Daily Item: It is not surprising that the Camden Firemen would like to drop the charge of fraud and dishonesty they have brought against Sumter, for they know such charges are unkind, ungentlemanly and untrue.

They are sore over their defeat, but can justly blame no one but themselves, for they had an equal chance at all prizes, and would have won had their team been faster than the winners; and to attempt to explain their defeat by charging fraud is small and unbecoming in gentlemen.

They assert that the water pressure was not good when they ran, and that they were forced to use more hose than the rules required, and claim they easily won first place, but were cheated out of it.

I deny each and every one of the above assertions, and will introduce in support of my assertions, statements from gentlemen whose standing is well known and whose honor and integrity cannot be questioned, and challenge Camden to produce any tangible evidence to support their statements.

No visiting company received more attention than did Camden, and they were tendered the use of everything in the department, and when they were not satisfied, with what we had, Capt. Hood borrowed for them, from the No. 3 Company of Columbia, wagon, harness and hangers, and further offered to secure horses, if necessary or desired.

Camden was the only company detected in the attempt to enter any race in direct violation of the rules and regulations governing the contest.

They, with all other companies, entered into an agreement to weigh all wagons stripped, and to furnish the net weight of wagons alone, to the starting judge, yet within a few hours after they entered into this agreement, they came to the track to enter the race, and it was discovered that they had 292 pounds of old iron concealed in their tool box, and the wagon had been weighed with this iron.

Why did they weigh this old iron with their wagon when they had agreed to weigh the wagon alone?

Then it was developed that Camden stated to the Chief Marshal that their hose had been measured by the starting judge, and found correct; he thereupon directed them to place the hose in their wagon and come to the scratch, when objection was raised, by a representative of the Delgar team, and their hose was ordered measured, and found four feet and four inches shorter than the rules prescribe.

Why did Camden attempt to enter the race with short hose?

For obvious reasons, they claim their hose had shrunk, but such a claim is preposterous, and can only mislead those who know nothing of the nature of hose.

The Delgar team ran a clean, fair race, in strict compliance with all rules and regulations, and asked nor received favors from no one, neither did they receive any special concessions, but ran a race totally devoid of all trickery, fraud or deception; and any statement, or insinuation to the contrary is absolutely false.

In support of my position, I beg that you will publish the accompanying statements, which were unhesitatingly furnished, and will explain themselves. Respectfully,

W. S. Graham,  
Capt. Delgar Reel Team and  
Chief Fire Department.

Sumter, S. C., July 10, 1902.  
Mr. W. S. Graham, Sumter, S. C.

Dear Sir: I was Chairman and Capt. Rhame, of the Camden team, was Secretary of the Captains' meeting, at which a resolution was introduced, and carried, to the effect that all hose wagons entering the races, must be stripped before being weighed, and the net weight of the wagon alone be furnished to the judges, and if any deficiency in weight should occur, then the Judges should supply the necessary weight by adding sacks of shot provided for the purpose by the Sumter Fire Department. Very truly,  
R. S. Hood, Chairman.

Mr. W. S. Graham.

Dear Sir: You ask me for a statement as to the facts as to weight of Camden hose reel wagon. I was asked by the Captains, or some of them, to weigh each and every hose wagon; all wagons to be empty and stripped of all weight except such hose as they intended to use. While at dinner on the day of races I was told by one of our young men who works with me at stable that Camden wagon had been at scales and he had taken weight of same. He told me the weight and I said, "Are you sure you weighed that wagon right, as that seems pretty heavy for that small wagon?" He said, "I am sure I weighed it right." I said, "Did you strip the wagon, see that everything was out of boxes?" "No sir, I did not," was his reply. I told him if he weighed it he should have done so. Some of the boys asked me

the weight of the Camden wagon. I told them I had not weighed it, but this young man had, and also his weight of same. They expressed surprise at weight and said that would not go, but Camden must weigh over and I must weigh it.

Some of the firemen went off and brought Camden back, with a young white man driving. I was told that he was the Chief of Camden's Fire Department. I asked him if he would open up and show his boxes, which he readily did. I found one of his boxes near the rear step full of old iron weights, and pieces of iron and brass, which I had him to take out and then I weighed it over and found his weight 1620 pounds. His first weight was 1912 pounds. Making a difference of 292 pounds. Now, Mr. Graham, I am not prepared to say that there was anything wrong in this weight, as Camden still had the weights in wagon when she came back to me, and I asked her Chief what connection they had to the fire wagon. His answer was we use them to help us when we have to put on more weight to get a certain amount of weight.

Now, I am sorry that there is some bad feeling in this matter and I don't care to have anything to say, but these are the facts in the case.

Respectfully,  
C. W. Stansill.

Charleston, S. C., July 14, 1902

Mr. W. S. Graham, Sumter, S. C.

Dear Sir: My opinion is that Tournament was absolutely fair and square, and each team had a fair start.

M. J. Grace,  
Starting Judge.

Columbia, S. C., July 9, 1902.

Mr. W. S. Graham, Sumter, S. C.

Dear Sir: During the hose wagon races held in your city, June 26th last, I was stationed at hydrant, as hydrant judge, and I am positive that every team received the same treatment, and so far as I was able to see, there was a total absence of every thing that bordered on trickery or fraud.

I am confident that the water pressure was the same throughout, and the winning team won on its merits.

Very truly,  
W. J. May,

Chief Columbia Fire Department.

Columbia, S. C., July 15.

W. S. Graham, Chief Fire Dept.

We have no complaint, everything fair and square.

Chas. Narey,  
Capt. Columbia No. 3.

Columbia, S. C., July 15.

W. S. Graham, Sumter, S. C.

Your courtesy all that could be expected and I have no complaint.

Jno. B. Rodgers,  
President Ind. Fire Co.

Columbia, S. C., July 15.

W. S. Graham, Chief Fire Dept.,

Sumter, S. C.

I consider the tournament held in your city as fair as any ever attended, both with courtesy and fairness to all.

Geo. A. Shields,  
Pres. Palmetto Fire Co.

Sumter, S. C., July 10, 1902.

W. S. Graham, Sumter, S. C.

Dear Sir: Following the wishes of the local firemen, I instructed the engineer at the pumping station to keep the standpipe running over during all the races held here during the recent tournament, and I am positive that my instructions were carried out to the letter. The maximum pressure obtainable at the hydrant at which all connections were made during the races, is from 53 to 55 pounds. Very truly,  
H. L. Scarborough,  
Supt. Sumter Water Co., and County Treasurer.

Sumter, S. C., July 10, 1902.

Mr. W. S. Graham, Sumter, S. C.

Dear Sir: I was stationed by the Mayor, at the hydrant to watch the water gauge, immediately after Delgar team ran; I then found the pressure to be fifty three pounds, from which point it never moved more than one to three pounds. I carefully watched the gauge while all teams were running, and I know that Camden had fifty-four pounds, which is as much as can be had at the hydrant to which all connections were made.

Very truly,  
L. E. White,  
Street Commissioner.

Sumter, S. C., July 10, 1902.

Mr. W. S. Graham, Sumter, S. C.

Dear Sir: Immediately following the run of the Delgar team, in the recent tournament, held here, my attention was called, by a Camden man, to what he claimed to be a difference in water pressure.

I thereupon examined the pressure gauge and found it then registered fifty-three pounds, which I believe to be the maximum pressure obtainable at that particular hydrant.

Mr. L. E. White, a sworn officer of the city, was then stationed to watch the gauge, and I requested a Camden man to assist, and also watched the gauge, and know the pressure remained the same, or practically so, throughout the remainder of the races. Very truly,  
W. B. Boyle, Alderman.

Sumter, S. C., July 10, 1902.

Mr. W. S. Graham, Sumter, S. C.

Dear Sir: I am chief engineer at the pumping station of the Sumter Water Company, and a practical plumber. At the request of the chief of Fire Department, I placed a water gauge near the hydrant to be used during the firemen's tournament, held here June 25-26 last.

I had instructions from the superintendent to have the stand pipe running over during all the races of the tournament, which instructions were very rigidly followed.

On the day of the hose wagon races, I started the pumps and had everything in good order, so left my assistant in charge of the pumps, and I went to see the races. When I reached the track I went immediately to the pressure gauge to see that it was all right, and to see that the pumps were working.

I very carefully watched the gauge throughout all the races, and I know the pressure was the same.

The maximum pressure was from 53 to 55 pounds, and the gauge at all times during the races, showed that the pumps were slowly working and the stand pipe was full, so there could be no difference in the pressure.

Very truly,  
W. H. Epperson,

At the request of Chief Graham of the Fire Department of Sumter, I make the following statement in regard to the action of the Camden Hose Team in the recent Firemen's Tournament held here. I was Chief Marshal

at the request of the Fire Department, and showed the same treatment to all the teams here. The only deviation from the orders given me was just before the Camden team ran on the second day. The judges on the stand called upon me to hurry up matters as it was then growing late. I went to the starting point and found the starting judge (Mr. Grace) trying to get off the Columbia team. I found the Camden hose then not in the wagon, and I asked the Captain if his hose had been measured and if it was correct, and he said "yes." I then said if you will state upon your word that your hose has been measured and is correct, I will order you to put it in the wagon, whereupon he answered "it is," I then said go ahead and hurry up things, whereupon Mr. Ernest Buitman, of the Delgar team, objected, saying "the hose must be remeasured." I then went to Mr. Grace and asked him if he had the measurements of the Camden hose in his book and he said, "I have not measured it, but will send my assistant, Mr. Daily, to do so at once, as I am starting this team." When I asked the Captain of the Camden team if his hose had been measured, I meant had it been measured by the judge as all the other teams had been done and was surprised to find that Mr. Grace did not have his measurements at all. He probably understood me to say had his hose been measured, meaning by himself, but in either case he had no reason or any right to say that they were correct, and when upon remeasuring they were found to be between 4 and 5 feet short. On my return to the starting point after the Columbia team had run, the hose were still not in the wagon, and I asked why, and was told that they had been measured and found about 5 feet short; asking why, was told that the hose had shrunk up. I then offered to procure some hose from the Delgar team for them, but was told that it would not fit. I did procure a section of hose from the Columbia team and lent it to the Camden team immediately. They complained of no discount on my part then, as it was procured at once. In my opinion a length of 300 feet of hose might shrink some, but hardly to the extent of 4 or 5 feet.

In the capacity of Chief Marshal I was thanked by many of the visiting teams for the fair treatment they had received, and the exceptionally clear track they had to run on, which they said reflected great credit upon Sumter and her firemen. All this being contrary to the statement made by the Camden team. Yours respectfully,  
Irving A. Ryttenberg,  
Marshall.

Sumter, S. C., July 10, 1902.

Mr. W. S. Graham, Sumter, S. C.

Dear Sir: I was on the track during the hose wagon races held here on June 26th, and I very frequently examined the water gauge, and at all times found the pressure practically the same. Very truly,  
J. K. Bradford,  
Chief Sumter Police.

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